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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/244,304	02/03/1999	MICHAEL W. BEACH	EN998071	3605

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SHELLEY M BECKSTRAND
314 MAIN STREET
OWEGO, NY 13827

EXAMINER	
AKERS, GEOFFREY R	

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
3624	

DATE MAILED: 10/15/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.	Applicant(s)
09/244304	Beach
Examiner	**Art Unit**
Harris, G	3624

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) ☑ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 9/25/03.

2a) ☑ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.

3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) ☑ Claim(s) 1-19 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above, claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) ☑ Claim(s) 1-19 is/are rejected.

7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) ☐ Claims _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.

If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of:

1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

*See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).

a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) ☑ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s). _____
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other:

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. This action is issued in response to applicant's Amendment D(Paper #29) filed 9/25/03.

2. Claim 15 was amended.New claims 16-19 were added.

3. Claims 12-19 including newly added claims, are pending.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

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5. Claims 12-13,15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Klein (US 5,845,285) in view of Geer (US 5,930,778).

6. As per claim 12, Klein discloses a method for operating a computing system, comprising the steps of: processing electronic invoices received from a vendor to identify duplicate invoices (abstract, column 5, particularly lines 55-65, column 6, particularly lines 1-5); introducing data (invoices) not identified as duplicates into a system (column 26, particularly lines 32-36); and electronically rejecting data (invoices) identified as duplicates without introducing the data into the system (column 26, particularly lines 38-43).However, Klein does not specifically teach preprocessing of invoices. Geer discloses preprocessing of original invoices before introduction into a database (title, column 5, lines 58-60, column 6, particularly lines 43-45). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicants' invention to use method of duplicate invoice identification of Klein in preprocessing of invoices before introduction into a database of Geer because this would allow duplicate data to be sorted out as soon as possible. Klein does not explicitly teach introduction to and rejection from a accounts payable data base. However, Klein does suggest this feature by disclosing correction of the system (column 26, particularly lines 40-44) and filtering database (column 27, particularly lines 22-25). Further, accounts payable data base is deemed to be inherent in Klein's description of invoicing system (column 5, particularly lines 46-65). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicants' invention to introduce and reject data from an

accounts payable database because this would allow filtering and sorting out to be implemented as soon as data is available. Klein further discloses a method for operating a computing system, comprising the steps of: auditing invoice file for a duplicate invoice item (abstract, column 5, particularly lines 55-65, column 6, particularly lines 1-5); upon determining data is a duplicate invoice having a same invoice number (column 6, lines 3-10), creating an electronic duplicate data transaction (column 26, particularly lines 37-43); and posting to the system only data determined not to be duplicate (column 26, particularly lines 32-36).Klein does not explicitly teach grabbing an inbound EDI invoice file from a vendor before it is input to a accounts payable database and creating a transaction to a vendor. However, official notice is taken that it is old and well known in the art of data entry to grab data before input into a database for the purpose of examination for error. Further, official notice is taken that it is old and well known in the art of electronic communication and commerce to use EDI for invoicing. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicants' invention to grab an inbound EDI invoice data before inputting it into a database because this would allow detection of duplicate as soon as possible.Klein does not explicitly teach creating transaction back to the vendor. However, Klein suggests this feature by disclosing a warning report system (column 26, particularly lines 38-43). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicants' invention to create a transaction back to the vendor because this would allow the vendor to be informed of the mistake and take corrective actions.Klein does not explicitly teach determining duplicate

invoice having same vendor invoice designation, same purchase order number, and same item number. However, Klein at least suggests this feature by disclosing determining duplicate invoice by comparing invoice number. Furthermore, official notice is taken that determining duplicate invoice having a same vendor invoice designation, same purchase order number, and same item number is old and well known in the art of invoice comparison. It would have been obvious to one or ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to determine duplicate invoices by comparing same vendor invoice designation, same purchase order number and same item number because this would allow accurate identification of duplicate invoices.

7. As per claim 13, Klein discloses auditing step comprising sorting invoices against invoice number (column 6, particularly lines 8-10).Klein does not explicitly teach auditing step comprising first sorting invoice against an accounts payable production table for same vendor, second sorting hits from said first sorting for same purchase order billed, third sorting hits from second sorting for same items billed on purchase order, and fourth sorting hits from third sorting to identify invoice as duplicate invoice if it contains an item having a net sum greater than zero. However, Klein does discuss using neural network (column 27, particularly lines 54-65) that executes multiple comparing and sorting hits (column 28, particularly lines 28-41), and identifying data as duplicate if it does not pass a threshold number of hits (column 28, particularly lines 44-45). This suggests sorting of invoice for same vendor, purchase order billed, and items billed, since they are essential for identifying duplicates. Further Klein also discuss

threshold value, term to describe the function of the "net sum greater than zero" of applicants' invention. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicants' invention to use invoice for same vendor, purchase order billed, and items billed as entries that are used in neural network comparing and sorting method of Klein because those entry values are essential for determining duplicate data. Further, it would have been obvious to one orf ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicants' invention to use zero as the threshold value disclosed in Klein because this would allow maximum detection of duplicates. Klein also discloses a method for operating a computing system responsive to receipt of an electronic input (abstract).Klein discloses automatically identifying previously received invoices having the same vendor invoice identifier (column 6, particularly lines 8-10, column 16, lines 1-5).Klein does not explicitly teach automatically grabbing an invoice from a vendor before it is input to a accounts payable database and creating a transaction to a vendor. However, official notice is taken that it is old and well known in the art of data entry to grab data before input into a database for the purpose of examination for error. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicants' invention to automatically grab an invoice data before inputting it into a database because this would allow detection of duplicate as soon as possible.Further, Klein does not explicitly teach automatically identifying invoices having corresponding items, and calculating the net sum of items on input invoice having corresponding items. However, Klein does discuss using neural network (column 27, particularly lines 54-65) that executes multiple comparing and

sorting hits (column 28, particularly lines 28-41), and identifying data as duplicate if it does not pass a threshold number of hits (column 28, particularly lines 44-45). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicants' invention to use item as a comparison factor in Klein's system because type of item is essential in determining duplicates. Further, It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicants' invention to calculating the net sum of items to determine if the data is duplicate since this would utilize Klein's threshold value.Klein does not explicitly teach automatically communicating a duplicate invoice rejection message back to the vendor without posting the input invoice to the accounts payable database. However, Klein suggests this feature by disclosing a warning report system (column 26, particularly lines 38-43). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicants' invention to communicate a duplicate invoice rejection message back to the vendor because this would allow the vendor to be informed of the mistake and take corrective actions. Further, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to refrain from posting the input invoice to the accounts payable database because this would prevent posting of duplicate entry Klein discloses posting to the system data determined not to be duplicate (column 26, particularly lines 32-36).

8. As per claim 15, Klein discloses a program storage device readable by a machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by a machine to perform method steps for processing electronic input (abstract), said method step comprising:automatically processing

electronic invoices received from a vendor to identify duplicate invoices (abstract, column 5, particularly lines 55-65, column 6, particularly lines 1-5, column 16, lines 1-5); introducing data (invoices) not identified as duplicates into a system (column 26,particularly lines 32-36); and automatically rejecting data (invoices) identified as duplicates without introducing the data into the system (column 26, particularly lines 38-43, column 27, lines 26-29).Klein does not explicitly teach preprocessing of invoices before introduction into an accounts payable data base. However, Geer discloses preprocessing of invoices before introduction into an accounts payable data base (abstract, column 6, particularly lines 43-45). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicants' invention to use method of duplicate invoice identification of Klein in preprocessing of invoices of Geer because this would allow duplicate data to be sorted out as soon as possible.Klein does not explicitly teach introduction to and rejection from a accounts payable data base. However, Klein does suggest this feature by disclosing correction of the system (column 26, particularly lines 40-44) and filtering database (column 27, particularly lines 22-25). Further, accounts payable data base is deemed to be inherent in Klein's description of invoicing system (column 5, particularly lines 46-65). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicants' invention to introduce and reject data from an accounts payable database because this would allow filtering and sorting out to be implemented as soon as data is available.Klein does not explicitly teach determining duplicate invoice having same vendor invoice designation, same purchase order number, same item number, and havin

sum grreater than zero. However, Klein at least suggests this feature by disclosing determining duplicate invoice by comparing invoice number. Furthermore, official notice is taken that determining duplicate invoice having a same vendor invoice designation, same purchase order number, same item number, and having sum greater than zero is old and well known in the art of invoice comparison. It would have been obvious to one or ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to determine duplicate invoices by comparing_same vendor invoice designation. same purchase order number, same item number, and having sum greater than zero because this would allow accurate identification of duplicate invoices.

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9. Claim 14 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over Geer(US Pat. No: 5,930,778) and further in view of Rail(US Pat. No: 5,680,611).

10. As per claim 14, Geer teaches a computing system responsive to receipt of an electronic input invoice from vendors, comprising an accounts payable database(col 7 lines 4-25)(Fig 1/4/5), sort logic for sorting invoices into credit/debit sequence in the order received(col 9 lines 26-28)(col 9 lines 37-44)(Fig 1/14/12/16), posting logic for posting credit invoices to said accounts payable database(col 12 line 38-col 13 line 3)(col 13 lines 51-65).Rail teaches net sum logic for evaluating debit invoices in sequential order with respect to previously received debit and credit invoices to identify a duplicate debit invoice item(Fig 3/220/212/214/202/204/208)(Fig 2/104/106/108/114/116/110/112)(col 2 line 50-col 3 line 5), a

duplicate debit invoice item being an invoice item having a net sum greater than zero determined with respect to previously received invoices in the same vendor invoice designation, same purchase order number, and same item and posting logic being further operable for posting to said accounts payable database only those debit invoices for which said invoice items have a net sum less than or equal to zero(col 4 lines 46-63)(col 5 lines 39-49)(col 5 lines 8-22). It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention to combine Geer in view of Rail to teach the above. The motivation for this is to describe a computing system that can correctly bill and remit debits and credits to clients and vendors.

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11. Claims 16-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Klein (US 5,845,285) in view of Geer (US 5,930,778) and further in view of Taylor(US Pat. No: 5,899,981).

12. As per claims 16-19, Klein discloses a method for operating a computing system, comprising the steps of: processing electronic invoices received from a vendor to identify duplicate invoices (abstract, column 5, particularly lines 55-65, column 6, particularly lines 1-5); introducing data (invoices) not identified as duplicates into a system (column 26, particularly lines 32-36); and electronically rejecting data (invoices) identified as duplicates without introducing the data into the system (column 26, particularly lines 38-43).However, Klein does not specifically teach preprocessing of invoices. Geer discloses preprocessing of original invoices

before introduction into a database (title, column 5, lines 58-60, column 6, particularly lines 43-45). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicants' invention to use method of duplicate invoice identification of Klein in preprocessing of invoices before introduction into a database of Geer because this would allow duplicate data to be sorted out as soon as possible. Klein does not explicitly teach introduction to and rejection from a accounts payable data base. However, Klein does suggest this feature by disclosing correction of the system (column 26, particularly lines 40-44) and filtering database (column 27, particularly lines 22-25). Further, accounts payable data base is deemed to be inherent in Klein's description of invoicing system (column 5, particularly lines 46-65). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicants' invention to introduce and reject data from an accounts payable database because this would allow filtering and sorting out to be implemented as soon as data is available. Klein further discloses a method for operating a computing system, comprising the steps of: auditing invoice file for a duplicate invoice item (abstract, column 5, particularly lines 55-65, column 6, particularly lines 1-5); upon determining data is a duplicate invoice having a same invoice number (column 6, lines 3-10), creating an electronic duplicate data transaction (column 26, particularly lines 37-43); and posting to the system only data and posting to the system only data determined not to be duplicate (column 26, particularly lines 32-36).Klein does not explicitly teach grabbing an inbound EDI invoice file from a vendor before it is input to a accounts payable database and creating a transaction to a vendor. However, official

notice is taken that it is old and well known in the art of data entry to grab data before input into a database for the purpose of examination for error. Further, official notice is taken that it is old and well known in the art of electronic communication and commerce to use EDI for invoicing. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicants' invention to grab an inbound EDI invoice data before inputting it into a database because this would allow detection of duplicate as soon as possible.Klein does not explicitly teach creating transaction back to the vendor. However, Klein suggests this feature by disclosing a warning report system (column 26, particularly lines 38-43). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicants' invention. However, official notice is taken that it is old and well known in the art of data entry to grab data before input into a database for the purpose of examination for error. Further, official notice is taken that it is old and well known in the art of electronic communication and commerce to use EDI for invoicing. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicants' invention to grab an inbound EDI invoice data before inputting it into a database because this would allow detection of duplicate as soon as possible.Klein does not explicitly teach creating transaction back to the vendor. However, Klein suggests this feature by disclosing a warning report system (column 26, particularly lines 38-43). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicants' invention

to create a transaction back to the vendor because this would allow the vendor to be informed of the mistake and take corrective actions.Klein does not explicitly teach determining duplicate invoice having same vendor invoice designation, same purchase order number, and same item. However, Klein at least suggests this feature by disclosing determining duplicate invoice by comparing invoice number. Furthermore, official notice is taken that determining duplicate invoice having a same vendor invoice designation, same purchase order number, and same item number is old and well known in the art of invoice comparison. It would have been obvious to one or ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to determine duplicate invoices by comparing same vendor invoice designation, same purchase order number and same item number because this would allow accurate identification of duplicate invoices.Taylor however,furthermore discloses a method for processing exchange vouchers(Abstract)(Figs 1-22A) inhcluding event logging and auditing parameters(Fig 5c/75.20/75.22)(Fig 5d) and voucher review(Fig 6b/76/80)(Fig 7) and comparing latest revs with present revs for error detection(Fig 6b/86.4).Taylor also teaches the use of flags(Fig 10) in a voucher profile and the reporting of errors(Fig 13c/76.18) as well as an electronic voucher format(Fig 17).Taylor also teaches voucher review for errors(Fig 18) and monitoring the status of vouchers(Fig 19)(Fig 20a)(Fig 21c) as well as changing a voucher and resubmission(Fig 21a).Taylor further teaches an adjustment summary(Fig 21f/75.94) for the vouchers and verification of valid sums on vouchers(Fig 21k).Taylor also teaches calculating a sum total of expense amounts in appropriately designated

fields(col 21 lines 1-61)(col 1 line 64-col 5 line 55).It would have been obvious to one skilled in theart at the time of the invention to combine Klein in view of Geer and further in view of Taylor to teach applicant's disclosure. The motivation to combine is to teach a system for handling the expediting of the processing of invoices as enunciated by Taylor(col 1 lines 57-63).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

13. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

> Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

14. Claim 15 is further rejected under 35 USC 101 for failing to provide a concrete and tangible result.

Response to Arguments

15. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 12-19 have been considered but are moot in view of the new necessitated ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

16. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

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Questions should be addressed to the primary examiner, Dr. Geoffrey Akers, P.E., who can be reached at (703)-306-5844 between the hours of 6:30 AM and 5:00 PM Monday through Friday. If attempts to contact the primary examiner are unsuccessful, the primary examiner's supervisor, Mr. Vincent Millin, SPE, may be reached at (703)-308-1065.

GRA

October 13,2003

DR. GEOFFREY R. AKERS, P.E.
PRIMARY EXAMINER